

HISTORY NEWS

SUMMER 2026



**DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY**

FACULTY OF ARTS AND
SOCIAL SCIENCES

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DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Marion McCain Arts and
Social Sciences Building, 1st Floor
6135 University Avenue
PO Box 15000, Halifax NS B3H 4R2

902.494.2011

history@dal.ca

dal.ca/history

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CHAIR'S MESSAGE

THE CHAIR'S MESSAGE IS SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT THIS YEAR given that I stepped into this role in an acting capacity in January 2026. The learning curve was steep indeed, but with the help and guidance of fellow faculty and new staff (Kenneth H. and Brian M.), we were able to steer the departmental ship into calmer waters. While the winter wreaked havoc on our syllabi (the weather gods deemed all storms were to happen on Monday, apparently), our spring was glorious and students used this positive energy to push them through their respective exam schedules. There has been occasion to celebrate this past year. For instance, one of our three newly-minted PhDs, Dr. Grace McNutt, landed a tenure-track job in the Department of History at UPEI; one of our own, Dr. Crooks (PhD '21), published her monograph, *At Home in the Cold*; and our medievalist colleague and part-time instructor, Dr. Schut, secured tenure-track employment at the *other* St. Mary's University (in Alberta). Our department had a brilliant showing at the Canadian Historical Association in Charlottetown with numerous panel presentations by faculty and graduate students. Moreover, our own graduate students mounted an extremely successful conference (entitled "Defiance Through the Ages") in mid-June. However, with the sweet comes the bitter, and the department was certainly sad to see the retirements of two pillars of pedagogy, Drs. Zachernuk and Bingham. May their retirements be prosperous and satisfying!

We have an exciting Fall 2026 around the corner. We will have a new graduate administrator in place in July named Mary Taylor. She comes with extensive experience at Dalhousie in Information Technology Services, and she is extremely keen to join our team. Welcome Mary! We will also be joined in January 2027 by our new Roper Hannah Chair in the History of Human Health and Health Equity, Jennifer Fraser. Moreover, we also welcome Isaac Saney who will share his time between the Department of History and the Black and African Diasporas Studies Program (BAFD). We would like to thank Gary Kynoch for stepping up to fill in as graduate coordinator for the Winter, and we welcome back Lisa Binkley from her very productive sabbatical and look forward to her resuming her tenure as graduate coordinator. And, also, a HUGE thank you to Krista Kesselring for her indefatigable work as the undergraduate coordinator.

Dr. Colin Mitchell

UNDERGRADUATE FEATURE

GRACE BENDER

From changing her academic path to discovering an unexpected passion for American history, Grace Bender took a winding route through her time at Dalhousie University. A Biology and History graduate, honours student, and recipient of the History academic medal, she reflects on finding the right balance between her interests, trusting her instincts, and following the opportunities that pulled her in unexpected directions. Now preparing to become a high school teacher, she shares what she learned at Dalhousie and why sometimes the best path is the one you never planned to take.

Q: Can you tell me a bit about your program at Dalhousie?

A: My program at Dalhousie was so much fun and so uniquely me. I did not start out by double majoring in biology and history (I believe the story of that is somewhere else), but whether under the official title or not I did spend the majority of my time doing biology and history. For me, this was the best of both worlds. I had friends fully majoring in biology who were inundated with multiple lab reports a week and the task to memorize the Latin names of just about every fish in the Atlantic, and I had friends majoring in history who were required to write an ungodly number of essays and respond to far too many discussion posts. While sure, I had to do both of those things, I had a balance. I had fewer lab reports and fewer essays, but I benefitted from being taught to do both at a university level. It was such a positive thing to be able to take a break from statistical genetics to read about the NAACP and Cold War politics, and then do the reverse. I was able to use my brain in different ways, and really prepare myself for switching between those two subjects when I would eventually teach them in high schools.

I think one of my favourite things to have happen when taking biology and history classes at the same time was seeing how similar they are. Maybe not in content, although there were some exceptions, but in teaching methodology. The idea of the unknown and uncertainty is explored deeply in both. Biology grapples with uncertainty in that no experiment is ever going to be perfect and we are

learning new things and correcting the old every day. This is the whole point of a hypothesis or a theory. We always leave room for amendments. This is the same in history. Uncertainty comes from our primary sources. Either we are relying on written or visual records made by people who are no longer here, or we are relying on the memories of people who are here which may not always be faithful. But the fact remains – the historian is usually not there for the history and so historiography is the best we can do. Similarly, the biologist is not inside the nucleus so indirect tests to do with light and reflections, and heavy isotopes are the best we can do. This is a connection that I think would be really hard to make for anyone who did not spend four years of their life studying biology and history at the same time and so it really stands out to me as one of the unique outcomes of my program.

Q: What inspired you to take on a double major rather than focusing on one subject?

A: The story of me doing a double major in biology and history is a bit of a journey. I came to Dal for the Medical Sciences program looking to prepare myself for medical school so I could be a forensic pathologist like Dana Scully from the X Files. I loved my first year of Med Sci, but during the summer between first and second year I was riding in the back of the car headed to a rugby game, looking out the window and thinking about how I didn't want to give up my next summer to stay in Halifax to study for the MCAT and



then if I actually wanted to be a doctor at all. I've never liked hospitals and the need to start volunteering at clinics was an unending nag in the back of my mind. So there I decided that I would not be going to medical school and that I would go back to what I really wanted to be all along before people told me I would make no money doing it – a high school teacher. So, in September after attempting one week of Neurophysiology I got some sage advice from a teammate to major in biology, which I had always loved and wanted to teach. So, in second year I majored in biology, with all my electives being in history because I have loved history since forever and if the school was going to make me take a bunch of random courses I was going to enjoy them.

So, it eventually only made sense for history to be my second teachable, considering how it was just about the only subject, besides biology, that I liked and the professors weren't all out to get you. So, during the second semester of my second year I declared a minor in history and became enamoured with Dr. Fisher's "woke" history classes. I continued with my biology major History minor degree all through to the end of third year, and at this point I was only taking biology and history courses, so I was loving my degree. The double major idea came late in my academic career at Dal. I was in the middle of figuring out which courses I would need to take in my last year to finish

my degree and to my surprise saw that I only need to take two additional history credits (on top of the ones I needed to finish my minor) to graduate with a full double major. This sounded like a pretty good deal to me and so I decided that is what I would do. I figured it would look great on my teachers' college applications to have a double major that matched my teachables and it would mean a degree that more accurately represented how much time I had spent in history classes over the past four years.

The idea of taking honours was a bit more complicated and had a lot to do with possibly going to grad school for history in order to stay in Halifax with my roommate who was going into nursing. Despite putting the grad school thing on hold, I did complete an honours project with Dr. Fisher as my supervisor, and I could not imagine finishing my years at Dal without a capstone project like that. So, by graduation, and after four years of changing my degree as much as I physically could, the official title of my degree became "BSc Combined Honours in Biology and History."

Q: How did it feel to receive the medal for History for your work?

A: Full disclosure, and at the risk of sounding callous, when I got the email about receiving the medal for History, I had no idea what it was or what it meant. I thought it was really cool and likely a significant accomplishment but save for doing an honours project I did not think I had done anything to separate myself academically from any of my history peers. I told my mom about it so she could know to pick it up for me from the SUB (because I was still in Ontario at the time) and that was that. Come the graduation ceremony, I saw they were announcing the medals as you walked across the stage. Because of my BSc I was in the biology graduation and I realized that only one person got the Marine Biology medal and only one person got the Biology medal, which I thought was odd because I assumed if you got over a certain GPA you were awarded a medal. So, when I got back to my grandparents' house I looked up what

a Dalhousie academic medal meant and my eyes widened as I read the webpage.

I'll be candid again here too – at this point I was feeling a combination of disbelief and guilt. First, I could not believe what I had accomplished. This was super cool and it was nice to have a physical reminder of my hard work. But almost immediately I felt bad because yes I had double majored in history and yes I had written an honours paper, but there were people who had spent four years in history classes, dealing with all types of professors writing papers upon papers and learning different languages who probably deserved this more than I did. I didn't even really consider myself a history student until the end of my third year. I told my mom about this and naturally she thought I was being silly and that I should be proud of my accomplishments. That helped and believe me I am very grateful to be recognized for my hard work, but in answering this question I wanted to be honest about how accomplishments don't always come without a little voice in your mind saying how you don't deserve it.

Q: What would you say is the most important thing you've learned while at Dalhousie?

A: The most important thing I learned at Dalhousie is that nothing is set in stone. If you feel trapped in your degree don't let it sit – do something about it. I am so grateful that I am graduating with a double major in biology and history and not going into a gap year because I couldn't get into medical school. Related to this, I learned that I had a massive support system. Professors, advisors, my friends, and teammates were all available to talk things through and give advice. If you are in doubt of anything, talk it out with someone. Most likely in talking out loud you will straighten yourself out, but if not you have that other person to help you along the way. Basically, if something is broken or not working, fix it as soon as you can and your future self will be so grateful. This goes for anything, not just school, but clearly the way I learned this was from changing my degree title until I liked it.

Q: Any advice for prospective History students?

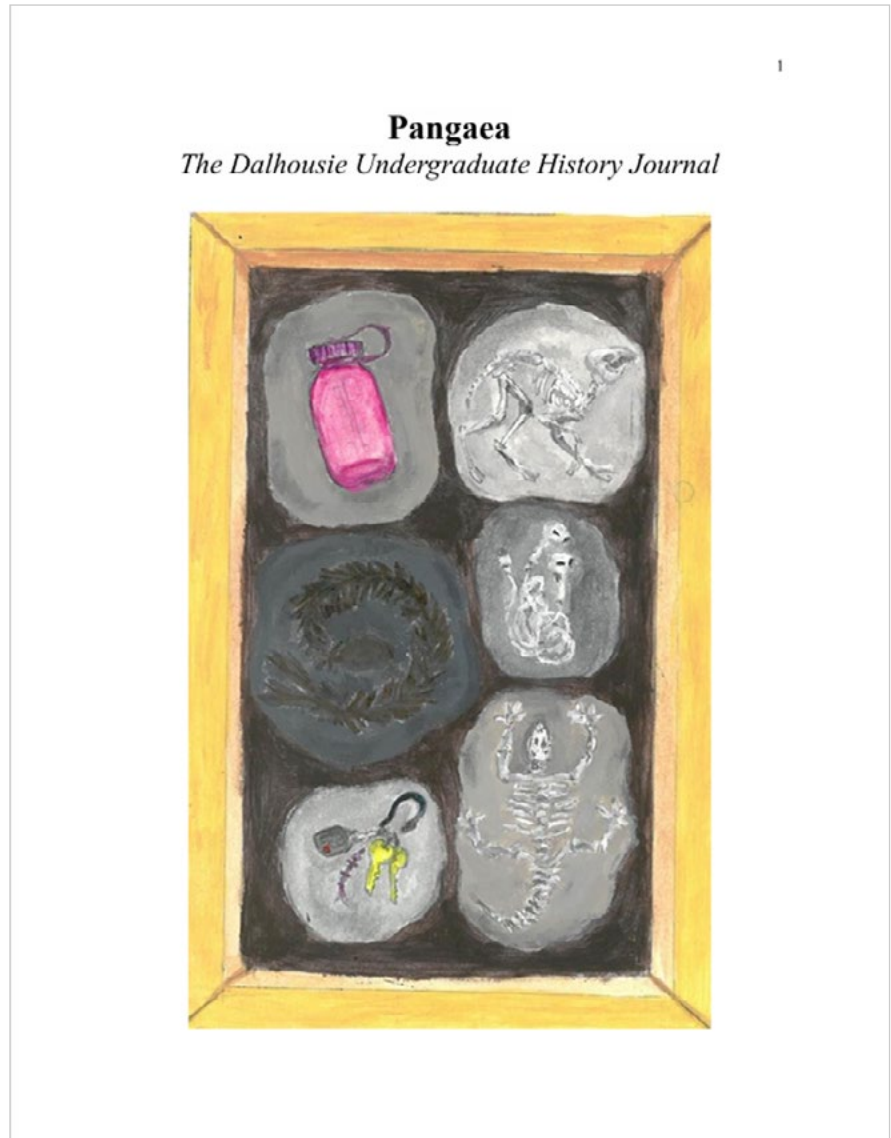
A: My biggest advice for prospective history students is to follow the pull. There is a lot of choice in the Dalhousie history degree. I have taken Dr. Fisher's American History since 1860 because I needed a class to fill my schedule and I knew I would eventually have to teach American History to high schoolers. I really just needed to know what was up with the Boston Tea Party and why Nixon was so bad. The world I was introduced to that semester was like nothing I had ever experienced before and I was completely sold. I took two more of Dr. Fisher's classes the following two semesters and then wrote my honours thesis with him throughout my fourth year. I changed my plan, went all in with American history, which I would never have expected from myself, and I am grateful for that decision every time I think about my degree. So, on top of the usual advice to please do all your readings, learn to write in long stretches, and go to office hours, follow the pull. I wasn't *supposed* to write a 95-page paper in woke American history but very clearly, I actually was.

Q: What are your plans for the future?

A: I've already mentioned this a few times so far but I plan on becoming a high school teacher teaching biology and history. I am going to St. FX in the fall for their Teachers' Education program (and admittedly their varsity rugby program as well) and then after that we will see. I would really like to start earning a wage as soon as possible, which might require moving to Northern Alberta, but my desire to complete a graduate degree in history is also still lurking. All I know is that I plan to listen to my own advice and follow the pull, whatever that may be.

PANGAEA: THE UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH JOURNAL

The supercontinent of Pangaea presented something of a wonder. In looking back in time on Earth and seeing a world so ancient and different from our own, it is not hard to appreciate the significance of that once large land mass that would eventually split and form our modern world. Needless to say, the small herbivorous synapsid, *Lystrosaurus*, which roamed across Pangaea during the early Triassic, had little awareness of the iconic world it was living in and the history it was a part of. Unlike *Lystrosaurus* however, many of us today are painfully aware of the history that is being created before our eyes. Every note we take in class, diary entry we write and every horrifying gas receipt we keep is a record of what is going on in the world today. Yet for history students, current events often prompt us to think about the past, which is what eleven of our undergraduate students at Dalhousie and King's have done to contribute to this journal. History is about the stories we tell ourselves and each other, and in this year's issue of Pangaea, the topical, temporal, geographic scope of these stories is especially impressive. From African women's history to modern American history and studies on material culture to conflict in early modern Asia, our students have demonstrated their immense dedication, hard work, curiosity and talent, in bringing their passion for history to the page. The amount of interest we receive in the journal for submissions is inspiring yet leads to a difficult selection process. The editorial board is responsible for sifting through these submissions with the intent of organizing a journal that accurately represents the strength and range of the Dalhousie and King's history departments, and which highlights the very best our students have to offer. We believe this 2026 issue of Pangaea does just that. So, please find some time to sit down, relax, and immerse yourself in the world of witchcraft, Greek graffiti, ornate vases, strong African women, and American teenagers that await you in the



following pages. The 2026 Pangaea team would also like to extend our condolences to the family of Jet Lachman, who sadly passed away during the selection and editing of this journal. You can find Jet's paper, "A World Within the Commonplace: Layers of Meaning in a 19th Century Commonplace Book," on page 82.

Lastly, we would like to thank Dr. Krista Kesselring, the 2026 Pangaea staff supervisor, for her guidance, support, and patience from the initial call for papers through to the publishing of this issue of Pangaea. Dr. Kesselring, your support has not gone unnoticed.

AWARDS

Graduate Prizes

FLINT PRIZE

Lina Drummond

Undergraduate Awards:

UNIVERSITY MEDAL

Grace Bender



GEORGE E. WILSON SCHOLARSHIPS

Prize for the most meritorious essay by a first-year student.

Claire Seitz

First-year scholarship, for a student with high standing in an introductory History class.

Everette Elgert

Scholarship for students completing an honours or major in History with high standing.

Mary Beke & Liam Diab

COMMONWEALTH ESSAY PRIZE

To facilitate and encourage the study of Commonwealth or British history. This prize is awarded annually for the best undergraduate essay on a topic relating to the history of Britain and/or the Commonwealth countries and is funded by a gift from Dr. David Jessop and Dr. Karen Ostergaard.

Joe Scharf

SUSAN BUGGEY ATLANTIC WORLD HISTORY SCHOLARSHIP

Awarded to a History major in recognition of the importance of studies in history that connect Atlantic Canada and its people to a multicultural world outside its region, nation and continent.

Amelia Jellis

EDITH AND ROSE GOODMAN SCHOLARSHIP

For students with the highest marks in Canadian history courses.

Andrew Morse & Grace Wakley

TOM & ADA JENNEX UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP IN HISTORY

For a History major finishing third or fourth year who demonstrates academic excellence in the study of the Atlantic World.

Piper O'Neil-Doak

FASS Awards:

MUSHKAT MEMORIAL ESSAY PRIZE

Emily Moore



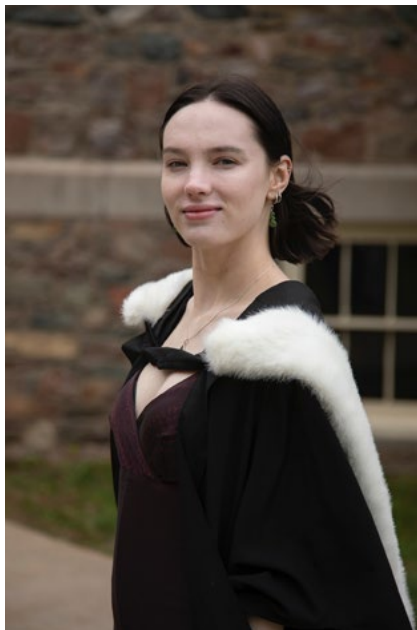
UNDERGRADUATES

Congratulations to the graduating undergraduates of Fall 2025 and Winter 2026! All of your dedication and perseverance have led you to this incredible milestone. As you move towards the next goals of your lives, continue to pursue your goals with purpose and integrity. We wish each of you success and fulfillment in the opportunities that lie ahead.

First Name	Last Name	Degree	Major 1	Major 2
Grace	Bender	Bachelor of Science	Biology	History
Romain	Herbinger	Bachelor of Science	Computer Science	History
Rhys	Waterman	Bachelor of Arts	History	Soc & Soc Anthropology
Nicolas	Desveaux	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Samuel	Orozco	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Rhys	Abraham	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Owen	Beard	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Connor	Lewitt	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Liam	Wirvin	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Rachel	Donnelly	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Cole	Joudrie	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Camille	Mutch	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Sofie	Sumner	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Robert	White	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Faith	Hood	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Colin	Dowd	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Brogan	Steffen	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Charles	Piotrowski	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Matthew	MacDonald	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Katherine	Sievenpiper	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Madison	Ayer	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Claudia	Dembeck	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Evelyn	Pottage	Bachelor of Arts	Law, Justice & Society	History
Zander	McLellan	Bachelor of Arts	Psychology	History



Lexy	Deveau-Carter	Bachelor of Arts	Religious Studies	History
Katelyn	Topshee	Bachelor of Arts	Religious Studies	History
Ani	Phillips	Bachelor of Arts	Env't, Sustainability & Society	History
Lauren	Konok	Bachelor of Arts	Contemporary Studies	History
Callie	Jurmain	Bachelor of Arts	Contemporary Studies	History
Caroline	Jones	Bachelor of Arts	Early Modern Studies	History
Sarah	Ryan	Bachelor of Arts	Early Modern Studies	History
Clara	Ross	Bachelor of Arts	History	Classics
Olivia	Temple	Bachelor of Arts	History	German
Kindred	Scott-Strong	Bachelor of Arts	History	Gender & Women's Studies
Emily	Reid	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Cesar	Valera	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Paul	Nanos	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Gracie	Bennett	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Liv	Traboulsee	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Joe	Scharf	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Satish	Patel	Bachelor of Arts	History	
Samantha	Sherman	Bachelor of Arts	Political Science	History



GRADUATE STUDENTS

OUR GRADUATING GRADUATE STUDENTS

We would like to give a hearty “felicitations” to our MA and PhDs who graduated this year in both the fall of 2025 and spring of 2026. Our graduate program continues to produce capable and well-trained people who embark on all kinds of walks of life (heritage studies, museum curation, law school, NGO participation, civil service, academia, etc.). Faculty leadership at convocation was particularly impressed by the fact that three (3!) PhDs graduated this June: Dr. Chioma Abuba, Dr. Liam Casell, and Dr. Grace McNutt.

We would also like to extend our heartfelt congratulations to the following:

Trina Roach (MA, 2025, supervisor: Dr. Wright)

Ava Clarke (MA, 2025, supervisor: Dr. Binkley)

Meaghan Bulger (MA, 2025, supervisor: Dr. Binkley)

Ronnie Blanchard (MA 2025, supervisor: Dr. Zachernuk)

Ben Webb (MA, 2026, supervisor: Dr. Bannister)

Katie Richie (MA, 2026, supervisor: Dr. Bannister)

Jamieson Urquhart (MA, 2026, supervisor: Dr. Zachernuk)

Francis Samson (MA, 2026, supervisor: Dr. Roberts)

Yufan Wang (MA, 2026, supervisors: Dr. Bell and Dr. Kozlov)



THESES

UNDERGRADUATES

THROUGHOUT MY UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES IN DALHOUSIE'S HISTORY DEPARTMENT, I have been fortunate to have found an area of research about which I am truly passionate. I recently graduated from Dalhousie with Honours in History, having written my thesis under the supervision of Dr. Gregory Hanlon. My thesis focused on the role of royal notaries and probate inventories in shaping legal, economic, and social life in early modern Agen, a small town in the heart of southwestern France. For this work, I transcribed and analysed photographs of probate inventories which are preserved at the departmental archives in Agen. Since the completion of my thesis, I have wanted to make the trip to Agen myself and sitting in the building that houses the documents I had read over many times and written about with such intrigue.

I write this article here now after travelling to Agen to work in the archives, not only as a student analyzing primary sources from a distance, but as a researcher learning the processes of archival work as a whole. Sitting in the reading room, requesting my own documents, sorting through archival material for my current project, and learning from the archivists themselves has changed the way I understand my own research. Although Agen today has a population of only roughly 38,000 people, its past remains present in its architecture, streets, and in the pride people take in their heritage. The Archives départementales de Lot-et-Garonne houses documents from Agen and its surrounding communes dating back to the early sixteenth century, and the archivists working here are passionate about what they do and are always incredibly eager to help researchers find exactly what they need.

As I continue my work on Agen moving into a master's degree in history, I am studying marriage records and the officialité under the reign of Louis XIV, looking at how marriage blessings, disputes, separations, family lineage, and questions of kinship were recorded. I came to Agen not only to collect material for my research, but to also gain firsthand experience within the archives and to learn the methods, routines, and processes that make historical research possible. Although I am not yet officially a master's student, learning from those who make my work possible at its core has been an amazing way to begin the next stage of my academic career. As I prepare to travel home to Halifax, I am already looking forward to making my return to Agen and continuing to immerse myself in the archives, culture, language, and history of this beautiful French town.

Eve Gilbert



SOMETHING THAT I FOUND ESPECIALLY STRIKING ABOUT WRITING MY THESIS was how strongly the research was guided by good questions. I first conceived of the topic while writing a much shorter paper in April of 2023, when I asked myself, “how can two civil rights organizations be part of the same, singular movement, if they feel so differently towards their place in anti-Vietnam War politics?” This question was the impetus behind that paper, but only because I had to ignore a second question that would have likely tripled the page count: why was the NAACP so against SNCC’s involvement in the anti-war movement when only a few decades ago the NAACP was a forerunner in third world alliance politics?” This was the question that made my need to write an honours thesis on this topic undeniable, and the question my entire second chapter is rooted in. Within that chapter, I asked myself many smaller questions, like, “how was the NAACP affected by Cold War Liberalism?,” “why was SNCC’s experience different?,” and “what threads connected the third world activism in the 1930s to that in the 1960s”? My third chapter was prompted by a different set of questions as well, and served the same purpose of driving my research.

I have talked about questions instead of giving a thesis summary, because one of those can be found in multiple sections of my thesis. I wanted to talk about questions because as a student it took me a long time to realize that good history research is not built on never-ending knowledge but instead knowing where you lack it. Not knowing something is also power – it is the power and potential to learn and research and then have that learning and research prompt more questions. And along the way you see yourself become full of a never-ending curiosity that doesn’t end when you turn in a paper or complete a course or graduate with honours.

Grace Bender

THESES

GRADUATE THESIS

The rapid development of LLMs has abruptly broadened public access to technical tooling, such that humanists can more readily experiment with digital methodologies. My M.A. thesis research leverages these developments to study implicit governance in the municipal council (regionally called the 'jurade') of Agen, in Aquitaine, France – the site of Gregory Hanlon's own doctoral research – during the reign of Louis XIV. I am processing the council's handwritten deliberation registers into a structured dataset in which every deliberation is linked to all of its signatories, as well as to all persons, institutions, places, and documents involved in the decision. The experiment starts from JPEG copies of the registers, downloaded from a regional archive's online repository. The image files are parsed into text lines by a model called Kraken, and the text lines are transcribed in initial drafts by an LLM, line by line, and these drafts are parsed by another LLM into XML records using the syntax and standards defined by the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI). From there, they are ingested into a Postgres database that structures the information in a way that both a historian and an LLM can query handily. So far this covers six registers spanning from the 1640s to the 1710s: roughly three thousand manuscript pages and over 2,500 deliberations. Since this is an emerging and unproven technology, my intention is to treat this as a kind of case study – I therefore find it necessary to carefully confirm each line transcription without exception. Through a publicly accessible webpage for querying and examining all the data of my thesis, readers will be able to trace each claim in the thesis to its sources in the database, and, in turn, verify against cropped images for each of the relevant manuscript lines.

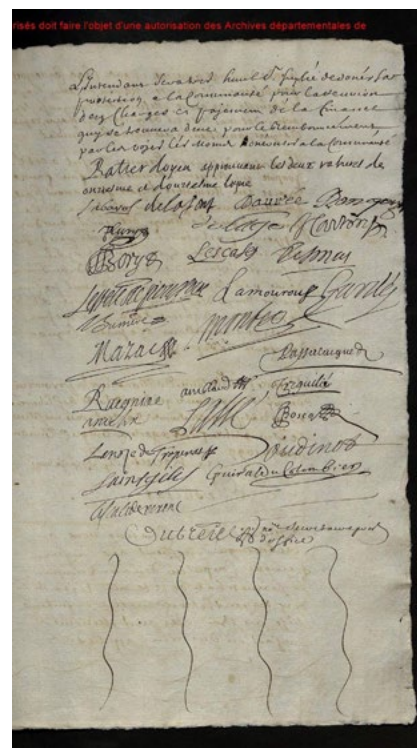
The Mitacs and SSHRC grants I received to develop this research next year at the Centre de Recherches Historiques (the institutional home of the Annales school, at EHESS in Paris) are specifically for spatializing these manuscripts:

the dataset will link particular people, institutions, events, and property records to their respective geographic locations on searchable maps. The representational possibilities are vast, especially for the study of a town and its relation to the surrounding region. The best such analysis I have conceived is visualizing, diachronically, the geographic reach of the council's decision-making. Are there patterns in when the jurats deliberated on matters further afield versus within their own city walls? Do these track with changes or interruptions in other regional institutions – a prorogation, for instance, or another de facto transfer of spatial authority to the council? An animation charting the changing spatial character of juridical and governmental decisions (the line between law and governance is extremely thin here!) across these six decades could show such overlaps – and a reader could verify that the manuscripts do in fact support the geospatial analyses shown in the maps, by viewing every line that mentions a given city or institution, and so on.

Developing data-driven history is a worthy goal whose character is being considered anew. It has been a central concern of the Annales school – a tradition I have been fortunate to encounter through Dr. Hanlon's mentorship. If AI is going to transform the discipline of history, then I hope this impulsion can be channeled toward supporting openness and transparency. Verifying the sources in academic history is always theoretically possible – the footnote is a sort of promissory note, in this way – but more often remains out of practical reach for the majority of a book or article's readership.

Canadian society expects openness of so many other institutions, and even other academic fields; why not include in the publication of academic history a more comprehensive representation of the vastly deeper and wider documentary analysis that goes into it? In short, making the manuscript sources of historical research 'open source' seems, to me, incontrovertibly ideal. If history has never before been in a position to open its own sources in this way – since publishing every archival document in print would only amplify the problem of too many sources; the map is not the territory, after all – it is seemingly in a position to do so, now.

Ky Woolner-Pratt



EVENTS

THE C.H.A. IN CHARLOTTETOWN!

In June 2026, the Canadian Historical Association held its 105th annual meeting in the beautiful city of Charlottetown. The History Department of Dalhousie was especially well-represented in the program with research presentations by graduate students, faculty, and Dal alumni. Newly-minted PhD, Chioma Abuba presented on her new project on gendered social history in Nigeria, while another newly-minted PhD, Grace McNutt, was part of a panel focused on the industrial history of Nova Scotia (plus: she had just been offered a job in the Department of History at UPEI!). Trina Roach (MA '25) and Mercedes Peters (MA '18) were part of a fantastic panel entitled “Mi'kmaw Women Are Gathering: Making History at the CHA”. There were also presentations by Dalhousie teaching faculty: Kass Luciuk presented her work on Ukrainian-Canadians during the Cold War Sara, Aaron Wright discussed the relationship between atomic energy and indigenous communities, and Sara Spike enthralled her audience talking about fog and environmental history in the early modern Atlantic World. The conference was hailed a huge success by the attendees, and we have one of our own to thank for this: Catherine Charlton, a Dal history grad (BA '21 and MA '22) and current Executive Coordinator of the CHA!



Sara Spike



CHA Executive Director Catherine Charlton (MA '22) and Colin Mitchell



Mi'kmaw women getting it done at the CHA! (left to right) Mercedes Peters (MA '18), Trina Roach (MA '25), and Natasha Simon.



Chioma Abuba (PhD '26) and Colin Mitchell



Aaron Wright and Trina Roach (MA '25)

EVENTS

“DEFIANCE THROUGH THE AGES”: THE 2026 GRADUATE HISTORY SOCIETY CONFERENCE

Thanks to the capable leadership of Maya Purakal (GHS President), the Graduate History Society hosted an extremely effective and well-run conference that addressed issues of gender, race, and power dynamics, with specific reference to notions of resistance and counter-culture in a variety of different spatial and temporal contexts. The one-day event (June 15) was book-ended by two keynote speakers: Dr. Jamila Ghaddar (University of Amsterdam) and Juanita Peters (Director, Africville Museum). Presentations were both in-person and online and were organized into sets of concurrent panels with plenty of healthy snacks and beverages available at

break times. There were 30 presenters (13 were virtual), many of whom traveled to Halifax from a rich collection of Canadian cities: Victoria, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Windsor, Kitchener-Waterloo, London, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Calgary, Fredericton, and St. John's!!!

After Juanita Peters' inspiring talk on Africville, the winner of the John Flint Prize for Best Paper was announced: Lina Drummond's "Seditious Sounds: The Role of Oral Culture in Irish Catholic Resistance in the Late Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries." Congratulations Lina!



STOKES SEMINARS

The Stokes Seminars are a longstanding tradition of the History Department at Dalhousie. The Seminar provides an opportunity for Dalhousie historians and visiting scholars alike to present their research and engage in lively Q&A and discussion.

Norman Pereira — Michael Karpovich's Liberal Legacy: A "Grandson's" Encomium - Oct. 7th, 2025

Justin Roberts — Roads and Rebels: Mountains, Mobility and Infrastructure in Jamaica and Scotland, 1720-1746 - Oct 28th, 2025

Kassandra Luciuk — Spies, Scandals, and Sabotage in Canada's Wartime Bureaucracy - Nov 4th, 2025

Phil Zachernuk — The problem with "African" in Modern African Intellectual History: some reflections and a heuristic gambit - Dec 2nd, 2025

Chioma Abuba — "Chiefs in African Intellectual History: Indigenous Knowledge Systems and the Ideological Maelstrom of 20th Century Nigeria." - Jan 27th, 2026

Kirsty Schut — "Dying to be Monks: Lay Death and Burial in Religious Habits." - Feb 3rd, 2026

Eamonn O'Keefe — "Siblings or Subordinates?: Brotherhood, Hierarchy and Discipline among British Army Officers, 1793-1815." - Mar 24th, 2026

Lisa Binkley — "The Old Otterbein Church Quilt: Community, Craft, and Place in Pre-Civil War Baltimore." - Mar 31st, 2026

MACKAY LECTURE SERIES



This year, the annual McKay History Lecture was given by Dr. Jack Bouchard, visiting from Rutgers University. Dr. Bouchard discussed his book *Terra Nova*, focusing on the early development of maritime food production as mariners from across Europe developed a seasonal fishery in the northwest Atlantic; a "bottom-up story of the fishworkers, whalers, First Nations, merchantwomen, oceans, and animals who together made a new colonial world in the early Atlantic."

FACULTY UPDATES

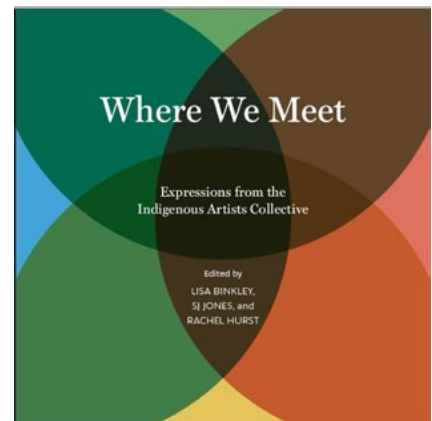
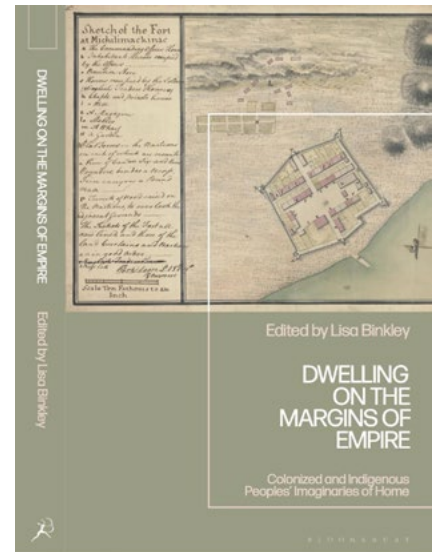
DR. BINKLEY

Dr. Lisa Binkley, Graduate Coordinator and Coordinator of the Art History and Visual Culture Certificate program, was on sabbatical during the winter term (2026) and spent much of the time bringing three book manuscripts to press: a monograph - *Canadian Quilts and Their Makers: Design, Material, Place in the 19th Century* (UBC Press); an edited volume - *Dwelling on the Margins of Empire: Colonized and Indigenous Peoples' Imaginaries of Home* (Bloomsbury Academic Press); and a co-edited exhibition catalogue with PhD Candidate SJ Jones (Dalhousie History) and Dr. Rachel Hurst (St Francis Xavier University) – *Where we Meet: Creative Expressions of the Indigenous Artists' Collective* (Goose Lane Press and the Material Culture Collective).

A sabbatical also gave Dr. Binkley time to get two new SSHRC-funded research projects underway: The McKendry Quilt Collection at the Canadian Museum of History and *Knitting our Legacy: Newfoundland Outpost Nursing Industrial Association (NONIA)* in collaboration with Dr. Kelley Totten (Memorial University) and independent film maker Sonya Jampolsky. In June, Dr. Binkley and History MA Candidate and Research Assistant Emily Davison travelled to the Canadian Museum of History in Ottawa and had the opportunity to work with the museum's conservator Brenna Cook, Historian and Curator Daniel Neill, Coordinator Lauren McCoy, and archivists to begin compiling

information for a catalogue on the McKendry's extraordinary quilt collection. June also brought about the initiation of the NONIA project with an initial meeting with the NONIA Board of Directors, Staff, and Archivists. With Totten and Jampolsky, the project brings together a historical study of the NONIA knitters and the organization's century-long history of industrial craft (lead by Binkley), pedagogical studies and oral histories of craft (lead by Totten) and a documentary film (lead by Jampolsky). For this project, History's MA Candidate and Research Assistant Jillian Moggy is working with the team and will present a literature review in Fall 2026.

Dr. Binkley and the team at the Material Culture Collective continue to build programming with the publication of *Where we Meet* (see above), the forthcoming publications of two co-edited volumes, *Living in a Material World: Atlantic Approaches to Material Culture* (McGill-Queen's University Press) and *Material Culture of the Atlantic: Maritime Objects* (Material Culture Review); the release of seasonal newsletters; the development of a Canadian Textile Study Group; and the upcoming Speakers Series, featuring two virtual sessions during the fall: *Historical Dress* on October 21st and *Quilt of War* on November 4th. For more information or to virtually attend either session, check out the website at materialculturecollective.ca.



FACULTY UPDATES

DR. KESSELING

Returning after a year's sabbatical in the UK, Professor Kesseling enjoyed stepping in as undergrad and honours advisor and co-teaching the big Intro to Humanities course with colleagues in Classics, Philosophy, and Theatre. She

presented research at conferences in Moncton, Montreal, and Sheffield, and gave a talk in the King's Early Modern Studies Students' Society's 'salon series'. She published an article on the history of conspiracy in the *Law and History Review*,

with an article on the history of witch trials forthcoming in the *English Historical Review*. She continues to contribute posts to a collaborative academic blog at *Legal History Miscellany*.

DR. HANLON

I am just back from my annual research trip to Europe, doing my best to keep cool.

I spent some archival time in Parma, putting the final touches on a bigish book, 'Bella Figura: Aesthetic sensibility in Baroque Italy'. This work examines pretty closely the decorative choices of people of all classes in Parma and its rural hinterland over about 150 years. The aesthetic urge is a deep-seated instinct in all societies, but in this period, Italy was particularly innovative. It examines domestic decor, from furniture, to tableware, to needlework, to wall hangings and painted pictures. A chapter studies dress, and finds that women in particular owned stocks of presentable clothes and accessories, far more than we anticipated, and they set the standard for the rest of Europe. Separate chapters underscore how the aristocracy, the clergy and the government knowingly employed conspicuous display to induce their peers and underlings to take them seriously. Consumer choice and variety were well in evidence in northern and central Italy from the mid-sixteenth century onwards, and was surely not an invention of England and the Netherlands.

In the coming year I will have four MA and Honours students (Ky Woolner-Pratt, Eve Gilbert, Amelia Jellis and Ainsley Gryzwinski) working on southwestern France in the age of Louis XIV. The challenge is to provide each with appropriate archival material, given that apart from parish registers, there is very little material available online. Every so

often I visit the departmental archives of the Lot-et-Garonne in Agen to select an array of documents that are suitable for beginners to learn to read the handwriting, and to acquire a familiarity with common kinds of sources. This year's harvest focused on notarial instruments - marriage contracts, testaments, apprenticeship contracts - focusing on the family. Previous years included probate inventories, also redacted by notaries. One compelling document I photographed, is a *livre terrier* from the small town of Layrac in the 1670s, a 900-page list of landownership in the jurisdiction. Not only does it enable someone to study the accessibility of landed property, this itemized list permits someone to recreate the emplacement of fields and pastures, woods and vineyards in their approximate location, thereby acquiring an understanding of the environmental context. It helps that the handwriting is impeccable!



COMING THIS FALL: COFFEE AND KLATCH!

Students and faculty are welcome to join the chair for a weekly gathering on our department patio. We expect to serve a variety of coffee drinks: espressos, cappachinos, lattes, and ice coffees.



RETIREMENTS

DR. PHILIP ZACHERNUK

After 30 years at Dalhousie University, Dr. Zachernuk retired at the end of the Fall 2025 term. With a specialty in African History, Dr. Zachernuk was an invaluable member of the History Department for all students with an interest in the subject. He is well remembered by the graduate students who had worked under him; Dr. Chioma Abuba, a recent Dalhousie graduate, had this to say about him: “What stands out most about working with Phil is his unwavering commitment and consistency as a mentor. Despite his reputation as a distinguished scholar, he remains approachable and accommodating. His mentorship created an enabling environment for me to learn and excel. Phil has a unique ability to meet students where they are intellectually and encourage them to expand their horizons without judgment or comparison. His feedback was always thoughtful, constructive, and effective.” Beyond the academic sphere, Dr. Zachernuk also organized plenty of recreational events within the department, which he says is one of his favourite memories of his career: “Among many high and low points, the annual “Best Curlers in History” mini-bonspiels and potluck dinners stand out. A long line

of graduate student volunteers helped me pull them together 25 times in my time here. Perhaps the best ones were when we enjoyed abundant numbers of graduate students and faculty, who made the events boisterous. The trophies listing all the winning and losing teams, happily, remain on display in the Department.” Dr. Zachernuk also discussed what he hoped the greatest impact from his career at Dalhousie would be in the years to come: “At the undergraduate level, helping to develop our rather unusual profile as a smallish department offering courses on many regions of the world. I introduced our first global history survey course, which other colleagues eventually shared, and more recently a global history of slavery. Sadly, this profile has been thinned as the Department shrinks. At the graduate level, I am proud to have continued our long record of Africanist scholarship, attracting and supervising, with a lot of support from many colleagues, well over a dozen brilliant doctoral students. I have a small shelf holding their books published by first tier presses based on their Dalhousie dissertations. Many have gone on to notable careers.” According to his graduate students, his work has

paid off. Dr. Abuba shared an example of what lessons she had taken from Dr. Zachernuk that she would carry forward into her own career: “One of the most enduring lessons I have learned from working with Phil is the importance of thoughtful, student-centered mentorship. His example has strengthened my commitment to inclusive pedagogy and to designing courses that value student perspectives, provide clearly structured yet flexible learning pathways, and foster intellectual independence. His mentorship demonstrated that rigorous scholarship and genuine care for students can, and should, go hand in hand – a lesson that continues to shape both my teaching and professional practice today.” As for what lies ahead, Dr. Zachernuk plans to spend his retirement pursuing his hobbies: “reading, kayaking, travelling, gardening, and trying to not forget I am a cyclist.”

DR. JOHN BINGHAM

Dr. Bingham retired at the end of the academic year after a long career with the Dalhousie History Department. During his teaching career, focusing on Modern European history and government, he guided students towards new understanding and interests in the topic. In his own research, he published on topics ranging from Weimar Germany to the rise of fascist parties in France prior to the Second World War. We wish him well in enjoying his retirement.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Do you have an interesting story to share?
Know of a former classmate who is doing
something exciting and newsworthy?

Email us at:
HISTORY@DAL.CA

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Editor-in-Chief
Liam Hall

Designer
Dalhousie Creative Services

FASS Alumni and Donor Relations Officer
Kayla Barbeau 902.494.6951 | kayla.barbeau@dal.ca

**FASS Manager of Communications,
Marketing and Student Engagement**
Genevieve MacIntyre 902.494.6288 | genevieve.macintyre@dal.ca